OBEDIENCE
TO
MAGISTRATES
RECOMMENDED,
IN A
DISCOURSE
Upon TITUS 3. 1.

Preached *September* the Ninth, 1683.

Put them in mind to be subject to Principalities and Powers, and to obey Magistrates.

By J. C. Rector of W. N.
I take this to be John Clapham, Rect.r of Wramplingham in Norfolk. J.C.

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OBEDIENCE

MAGISTRATES

DISCOURSE

TO THE READER.

READER,

CHriſtian Obedience *to* Magiſtrates *is a Duty ſo neceſſary both to the Publick Peace and Welfare of Church and State, and to the Private Good of particular Perſons and Places, that the* Publiſher *judges he needs not much to apologize for the ſending forth theſe Papers that perſwade thereunto. The Diſcourſe is ſhort, plain, and intelligible, and ſo more adapted to the uſe of thoſe that may have need of it. There is nothing in it that may exaſperate the Spirits of any,*

but

but what may be useful to the Information of every Sincere Christian, who is willing to know and practice his Duty. The Author *is no* Court Parasite, *suiting his* Principles *to* worldly Interest, *that he may get* Preferment *by them; but desiring to go forth* Incognito, *he covets no other* Happiness *on Earth, but to serve God faithfully, that little time he hath to live, in an obscure Country-Town.*

Reader, *It concerns thee, if thou wouldst approve thy self a sincere Christian, to consider how far thou art to comply with this Duty, which is one of the main Commands of the Gospel. Thou canst not be Christ's Disciple, if thou hast not respect to all his Commandments. Read, and consider, and the Lord give thee understanding in all things.*

CHRI-

CHRISTIAN OBEDIENCE

RECOMMENDED,

From TITUS III. 1.

Put them in mind to be ſubject to Principalities, and Powers, and to obey Magiſtrates——

THIS Epiſtle was written by St. *Paul* to *Titus*, left by him at *Crete* for the ſetling the Affairs of the Churches there, to direct him in his Office, and learn him how to behave himſelf in the Church, which is the *Houſe of the Living God*, as the Apoſtles Phraſe

is, 1 *Tim.* 3. 15. as that Epistle was sent also to *Timothy* at *Ephesus* upon the same account. In the first Chapter of this Epistle he gives Directions to *Titus* about the Ordination of Elders or Presbyters in the Churches, (called in the *French*, *Prestres*, and by us *Priests*; Names derived from the *Greek* Word Πρεσβύτερος.) He shews what Qualifications they must have, and orders the stopping the Mouths of False Teachers. In the second Chapter, he gives Directions what Duties are to be preached to several sorts of Persons, to aged Men and Women, to young Men and Women, to Servants, &c. In the third Chapter he directs the teaching of some other Duties, as Subjection and Obedience to Rulers and Magistrates, and to do all good Works: *Put them in mind to be subject to Principalities and Powers, to obey Magistrates, and to be ready to every good Work.* That which I shall make the Subject of my Discourse from the Text, is this Doctrinal Proposition:

Prop. *That Ministers are to mind their People to be subject to Principalities and Powers, and to obey Magistrates.*

This is a Precept not onely fitted for that

time,

time, but neceſſary for all Ages, therefore left here upon Record: *Put them in mind, &c.*

The two great Apoſtles, St. *Paul* and St. *Peter*, inſiſt much upon it. St. *Paul* urges it, *Rom.* 13. more fully, *Let every ſoul be ſubject to the higher Powers; for there's no Power but of God, the Powers that be, are ordained of God*: and he urges it by many other Reaſons in the following Verſes. And St. *Peter*, 1 Ep. 2. 13. *Submit your ſelves to every Ordinance of Man for the Lords ſake, whether to the King as Supreme, or unto Governours ſent by him; for ſo is the will of God, &c.*

For the clearing the Propoſition, I ſhall ſhew, 1. What is meant by *Principalities*, *Powers*, and *Magiſtrates*. 2. What Subjection and Obedience is to be yielded to them. 3. Why Subjection and Obedience is to be given to them. 4. In what manner it is to be done. 5. Why Miniſters ſhould put the People in mind of it. Then, 6. Apply the Diſcourſe practically.

I. *What is meant by Principalities, and Powers, and Magiſtrates, to whom we are to be ſubject, and yield Obedience?*

Anſw. The Scriptures uſe many Words to ſet them forth by: Sometimes we have the Word

κυριότης used, as in *Peter* and *Jude*, signifying the Dominion and Authority in Rulers to make Laws, and establish them by their Sanction: Sometimes we have the Word ἀρχαὶ, as in the Text, to shew, that Rulers derive their Power from God originally, and are by him immediately endued therewith: Sometimes they are called *Dignities*, δόξαι, or *Glories*, as in *Jude*, because God hath given them great Glory among Men; as 'tis said of *Nebuchadnezzar*, *God gave him a Kingdom, and Majesty, and great Glory*: and there is a lawful Splendour and Pomp they may bear, for the maintaining their Honour in the Hearts of the People: Sometimes *Powers*, δυνάμεις, because of the great Power and Strength (*vis naturalis*) God puts into their Hands, to support their Government, and keep all in Obedience: Sometimes ἐξουσίαι, as in the Text, rendred more properly *Authority* than *Power*, (*vis moralis*) because they have Authority to make Laws, and govern their Subjects by them: Sometimes ὑπεροχὴ, *Eminency*, heighth of Place above others, as 1 *Tim.* 2. 2. *Pray for Kings, and all that are in Authority*, or, as in the Margin, *in Eminency*. There are other Words used in Scripture,

ture, but I ſhall not name all; you may underſtand by this who are meant by *Principalities, Powers, and Magiſtrates, viz.* Thoſe that are in Supreme Rule and Authority over a People, together with the Subordinate Magiſtrates under them; for I ſhall include both, as St. *Peter* teaches me, 1 Pet. 2. 13, 14. *Both the King that is Supreme, and Governours under him.* To ſuch we are, by Divine Command, to be ſubject and obedient, if they be our Lawful Rulers, yea, though they ſhould be Heathens or Perſecutors, (as they were at this time when the Scriptures were written); yet we are to give them Obedience in all things not contrary to the Laws of God and the Land; and to be ſubject, ſo as not to riſe up in Rebellion againſt them, even when they command contrary thereunto. Which leads me to the ſecond thing, *viz.*

II. *What Subjection and Obedience is to be yielded to them that be in place of Government and Authority over us.*

Anſw. Here are two Words in the Text I muſt explain; *Be ſubject to them, Obey them.*

1. *Be ſubject to them,* ὑποτάσσεσθαι: The Word ſignifies, we ſhould keep our ſelves in an orderly

ly subjection to them, in that place and station God hath set us, not leaving our place of subjection, (as Soldiers who are to keep their Ranks and Files.) It's opposed to Mutiny, Sedition, Disorder, and Confusion, or whatever tends to the Dissolution of Government. It implies several things in it. 1. An inward Reverence of Heart to them; to esteem them highly, because of that Authority and Honour God hath conferr'd on them, as his Deputies and Vicegerents, if not for their personal Worth, yet for the Sovereignty God hath committed to them, to give *honour to whom honour is due*, *Rom.* 13. to bear an inward Reverence to them, because of God's Image on them, not despising or contemning them for any thing we judge amiss in them. 2. Respectful Language of the Tongue toward them, not speaking any reproachful Words of them, tending to the prejudice of their Government; but to cover their Weaknesses, (as *Shem* and *Japhet* did their Father's Nakedness) considering what strong Temptations their high Places expose them to. 3. The submitting our whole Man to the obedience of their legal Commands; to serve them in Peace and War,

War, according as Duty obliges us; to be *ready to every good Work*, as the Apostle adds in the end of the Text; to do all Duties the Law obliges to; yea, submitting our Necks to the Yoke, (as the Word may signifie) tho it seem burdensom to us; not disobeying in any lawful thing, nor rising up in Rebellion against them, if they should command any thing either unjust or illegal. 4. And that our Estates be subject to them, willingly paying Tribute and Custom according to the Laws, *Rom.* 13. 7. and as Christians, paying them spiritual Tribute, *offering up prayers and thanksgivings to God for them*, 1 Tim. 2. 1. *Chrysostom* notes, this Word comprehends all Duties and Services that Subjects owe to their Rulers and Governours. Thus *be subject to them, ready to every good work.*

2. The second Word the Text uses is πειθαρχειν, *obey them.* Criticks observe, it signifies a free and voluntary Obedience to them, without simulation or coaction; that we perform all the Duties of Subjects in a due manner, not being false to them, but faithful Subjects; not compelled by fear and terrour, but moved out of Conscience to God's Command, who hath ordained

dained Magistracy among Men, because it's his Ordinance, being *subject not for wrath, but for conscience sake*, Rom. 13. 5.

III. *Why must Subjection and Obedience be thus yielded to Rulers and Magistrates?*

Answ. For these Reasons.

1. Because Magistracy is the Ordinance of God, it's of Divine Institution. This Reason the Apostle uses, *Rom.* 13. 1. *Let every soul be subject to the higher Powers, because there's no Power but of God, the Powers that be, are ordained of God; therefore we must needs be subject for conscience sake:* Prov. 8. 15. *By me Kings reign, and Princes decree Justice; Judges, and all the Rulers of the Earth,* &c. They are God's Deputies and Vicegerents; therefore the Name of *Gods* is given them in Scripture, (*I said ye are Gods, but ye shall die like Men*, saith the Psalmist.) God hath delegated a part of his Power to them, even in the Church, which is governed by God's Word and Spirit; he is pleased to set Governours, 1 *Cor.* 12. 28. therefore much more in the State, where there is a greater necessity of it: So that we must needs be subject to them, and obey them, because of God's Ordinance. Not to do so, is to fight against

againſt God, *and ſuch as reſiſt ſhall bring damnation to themſelves*, Rom. 13. 2.

2. They are ordained of God for the common Good of Mankind, and therefore we have greateſt reaſon to obey them, *Rom.* 13. 4. *He is the Miniſter of God unto thee for good*, ſpeaking of the Supreme Ruler or Magiſtrate, and bidding us to obey him on this account. There is a fourfold Good that we receive by Magiſtracy, Natural, Moral, Civil, and Spiritual.

1. Natural Good. Thro' Government our very Lives are preſerved in ſafety, elſe *homo homini lupus*, one Man would be a Wolf and Lion to another: What Violences, Murders, and Bloodſhed would be committed amongſt Men!

2. Moral Good. That Vice and Wickedneſs hath any Reſtraint, and Vertue and Goodneſs any Encouragement, is from Laws and Government. How vile would many Men be that fear not God, if no Laws of Men reſtrained them? When there was *no King in Iſrael, every man did what was right in his own eyes*, and all Wickedneſs abounded. *Rom.* 13. 3. the Apoſtle ſaith, *Rulers are a terrour to evil works.* In the worſt Government there are ſome Laws to re-

ſtrain it, therefore it's a great Mercy to Mankind.

3. Civil Good. That our Poſſeſſions and Rights are preſerved, we owe to Government; elſe the ſtronger would prey on the weaker, and every place would be full of Thieves and Robbers; Propriety could not be preſerved.

4. Spiritual Good. Religion is preſerved in the World hereby, and the Worſhip of God maintained. The Magiſtrate is Keeper of both Tables. Even by the Light of Nature *Ariſtotle* taught, the firſt Care of Kings ſhould be about Religion: It's their Duty to maintain the True Religion, and ſuppreſs Idolatry, Blaſphemy, and Contempt of Religion. Theſe Benefits Men reap moſt evidently, when they have good Governours; then they enjoy Peace and Proſperity, and Religion is in a flouriſhing condition. And if they have bad Governours, it's God that puniſhes them for their Sins, and makes them Scourges to Men; and they ſhould humble themſelves for their Sins, and turn to God, and he would ſend them relief. However, bad Government is better than none: Tyranny is better than Anarchy and Confuſion. It's one of

of the ſaddeſt Curſes to have no Kings nor Governours: *Hoſ.* 3. 4. it's propheſied of *Iſrael* in their deſolate Eſtate, *they ſhould have neither King, nor Prince, nor Sacrifice, &c.* We read in the ſtory of the *Levite's* Concubine, what wickedneſs was committed in *Iſrael* when there was no King. What a Den of Wild Beaſts would the World be without Government! None could live in peace, every one would prey upon his Neighbour. *Nebuchadnezzar*, tho a Tyrannous King, is ſet forth in *Daniel* as a *great Tree, under whoſe Branches the Fowls and Beaſts had ſhelter.* *Saul*, tho a bad King, *clothed the Daughters of Jeruſalem in Scarlet.* *Government is as neceſſary to Mankind*, ſaith one, *as the Sun, Air, Bread, Water, &c.* And therefore being for Common Good, be ſubject unto them.

3. From that particular Good every one will reap by ſubjecting himſelf to Government, and Evil by reſiſting it. It is to be obſerved, That the Fifth Commandment, *Honour thy Father and thy Mother, &c.* is called by the Apoſtle, *Eph. 6. the firſt Commandment with promiſe.* It hath the Promiſe of Length of Days and Proſperity annexed to it. Now it's to be un-

derstood of Political Parents, as well as Natural; and it implies also a threatning of some outward Judgment to the Violators of the Command, as shortning their Days; they that resist them, shall not be long in the Land of the of the Living. It may be observed, That the most that are recorded in Scripture for resisting of Government, had untimely Ends; as *Corah* and his Company, *Absolom*, *Sheba*, *Joab*, *Shimeah*, *Adonijah*, *Zimri*, *Athaliah*, *&c.* according to that, *Prov.* 17. 11. *An evil man seeketh Rebellion, therefore a cruel Messenger shall be sent unto him.* But that is most terrible that the Apostle speaks, *Rom.* 13. 3. *They that resist, shall receive to themselves damnation*; not onely *temporal punishment*, but, if they repent not, *eternal damnation.* God will maintain his own Ordinance, and punish the Violators of it. Such do, Giant-like, fight against God, and therefore shall meet with Destruction. Thus you see what reason there is to obey and be subject to Rulers and Magistrates.

IV. *But how, and in what manner must we yield Subjection and Obedience to them?* I answer,

1. We must give it to all in Authority, good and

and bad; as the Apoſtle ſpeaks of Maſters, 1 *Pet.* 2. 18. *Servants muſt be ſubject, not onely to the good and gentle, but alſo to the froward*: ſo muſt we be ſubject to all in Authority, (that be our Lawful Rulers, not Uſurpers) not onely to the good, but to the bad. It's due to the Office primarily, whoever bear it; then to the Perſons placed in it by God. The Apoſtle in the Text ſpeaks of Principalities and Powers in the abſtract; and when he required Subjection to the Higher Powers, *Rom.* 13. it was at that time when *Caligula*, *Claudius*, or *Nero* reigned, thoſe Monſters of Men, and cruel Perſecutors; yet, ſaith he, *Let every ſoul be ſubject*, &c. If God ſhould give us the worſt Magiſtrates, we muſt not reſiſt them, but muſt reverence the Powers, and be ſubject to them; and *this is thank-worthy*, 1 *Pet.* 2. 16.

2. Yet we muſt *obey them onely in the Lord.* As we muſt look on them as ſet in the place of God, ſo muſt we obey them onely in all things agreeable to the Will of God. If they command things contrary to his Will, then we muſt rather obey God than Man, as the Apoſtle teaches, *Acts* 5. 29. The reaſon of it is, Becauſe God

God is the Universal and Supreme Sovereign. If an inferiour Officer command any thing contrary to the Will of the King and his Laws, we must obey the Will of the King before his: So if a King, contrary to God's Will, commands us any thing, we are to obey him that is King of Kings. In such a Case the Laws of Men are null *ipso facto*, as *St. Austin* speaks, *There can be no Law of what is not just*: And *Bernard*, *What Man commands, if God forbid it, it is repealed by the Sovereign Lord by whom Kings reign. Things materially evil, cannot be justly commanded, nor lawfully done.*

3. Not for fear of *Wrath* onely, but for *Conscience sake*, *Rom.* 13. 5. The fear of Man may often restrain from resisting, (especially the fear of God, who threatens *damnation*); but Conscience to God's Command should chiefly make us to obey Magistrates in what they command according to Law: 1 *Pet.* 2. 13. *Be subject* (saith he) *to every Ordinance of Man for the Lord's sake.* He hath ordained Magistracy, and commanded Obedience to it.

4. Willingly and heartily, *Eph.* 6. 7. *With good will doing service as to the Lord, not to Man*:

Col.

Col. 3. 23. *Whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, not as to Men; and ye ſhall receive of the Lord the Reward of Inheritance: for ye ſerve the Lord Chriſt.* The Apoſtle ſpeaks of Servants doing their Duties to their Maſters; but it's true alſo of Subjects doing their Duties to Magiſtrates: they are to do it *willingly and heartily, as to the Lord.*

V. *But why ſhould Miniſters put their People in mind to be thus ſubject to Magiſtrates, and obey them?*

Anſw. For theſe Reaſons.

1. Becauſe every Duty is to be preſſed by them; they are to make known to them the whole Will of God, even all things neceſſary to Salvation, of which this is one principal Command, a Branch of the Fifth Commandment, *Honour thy* Political *Father and Mother*; and this Honour cannot be ſhewn them without Subjection and Obedience. Now tho People know this, yet they have need to be *put in remembrance of it*, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks *Jude* 5. they need to have *their pure minds ſtirred up by way of remembrance*, 2 *Pet.* 3. 1. Known Duties muſt be whetted on us again and again. This is one great End of the Miniſtry, to ſtir up People to the

the Practice of ſuch Duties as they know; their Minds are forgetful, their Affections dull, and they are backward to the practice of many Duties, and therefore have need to have them often urged. It's a fooliſh Cavil ſome have againſt Miniſters preaching the ſame Duties again ſometimes; even the Spirit of Chriſt is promiſed by him, *John* 14. to bring to our remembrance what himſelf had before ſpoken.

2. The Holy Ghoſt foreſaw, that ſome Chriſtians, under pretence of Religion, would caſt off Subjection to thoſe in Authority; being made free by Chriſt, they would not be Servants to Men, abuſing their Liberty. The Scriptures foretel it would be ſo with ſome, *Jude* 8. *They deſpiſe Dominion, and ſpeak evil of Dignities*: So 2 *Pet.* 2. 10. Both Places ſpeak of ſome that would highly pretend to Religion, and yet be guilty of this Sin; therefore, ſaith he, *Put them in mind to be ſubject, &c.* There's a Spirit in Men ready to *turn the Grace of God into wantonneſs*, under pretence of Religion to caſt off Obedience to Rulers, as the *Anabaptiſts* in *Germany*, and others, have done. Some obſerve, the *Cretians* were a very ſeditious People, and needed

needed this Admonition; therefore the Apoſtle bids, *Put them in mind.*

3. Becauſe there ſometimes might be ſtrong Temptations to this Sin; as when evil Governours ariſe, that rule with an high hand, and oppreſs their Subjects, and deal unjuſtly with them: It's an hard thing then to be ſubject to the froward and cruel, as we are to the gentle and kind; to own the Ordinance of God, when in the hands of evil Men. This ſtrongly tempts a People to reſiſt, as the Burdens of *Rehoboam* made the Ten Tribes to revolt, tho they got nothing by it; for we read not of one good King in that Kingdom of *Iſrael*. To ſubmit to harſh Governours, and evil Rulers, is againſt Fleſh and Blood; nothing but Conſcience to God's Command can make us willingly ſubmit to ſuch a Yoke; therefore *put them in mind to be ſubject, &c.*

4. Becauſe of the great Scandal that would come to Religion, and the Name of Chriſt, by reſiſting the Powers of the World, and refuſing to be ſubject to them; therefore *put them in mind, &c.* It hath been an old Cavil againſt Religion and Chriſtians, *They are ſeditious, rebel-*

lious, and turbulent Persons: Thus they have been represented in all Ages. We find the *Jews* thus of old accused by their Enemies, *They would not obey the King's Laws, and Jerusalem was a rebellious City*; and by this means the Rebuilding of the City and Temple was hindred. *Daniel* and the Three Children suffered under this Notion: St. *Paul* was accused as a *turbulent Fellow, and mover of Sedition*; nay, Christ himself, to be *no Friend of Cæsar*, tho he declared, *his Kingdom was not of this World*, neither medled with Temporal Kingdoms, but sought to bring Men to the Kingdom of Heaven. Tho Christianity of it self doth not disturb Government, but uses the most effectual Means to secure it, by teaching it is God's Ordinance, and Men must be subject to it for Conscience sake to God's Command, and for fear of Damnation, *&c.* yet if Christians, that profess it, should not live quietly, and in due subjection and obedience to it, they would be a great scandal to it, and hinder the progress of it in the World; therefore *put them in mind to be subject to Magistrates, and to obey them*, that the Name of Christ and his Gospel may not be blasphemed, but that Christianity

may

may appear aimiable and winning unto all, by teaching all its Profeſſors to live harmleſly and peaceably, *as the Sons of God without rebuke, in the midſt of a crooked Generation.*

I come now to Application.

Uſe. Let me fulfil my Duty according to the Text, to *put you in mind to be ſubject to Principalities and Powers, and to obey Magiſtrates*; to yield them all due ſubjection and obedience. This is a great Chriſtian Duty, enjoyned by the Apoſtle St. *Paul*, *Rom.* 13. 1. and preſſed by him with many Arguments; and alſo by the Apoſtle St. *Peter*, 1 *Pet.* 2. 13. And in my Text Miniſters are enjoyned to preach it to their People; *Put them in mind, &c.* It was practiſed by our Lord and Maſter Chriſt himſelf, when he was upon Earth, he was ſubject to the Authority he was under, paid Tribute to *Cæſar*, and ſubmitted to be Judged by his Officers; tho unjuſtly uſed, he reſiſted not, when as *he could have prayed his Father, and he would have ſent him more than twelve legions of Angels* to reſcue him; yet he ſubmitted freely, to leave us an Example. This was practiſed alſo by all his Followers, who made no Inſurrections againſt the Govern-

ments where they lived, (as did ſome others) but quietly ſubmitted, either in obeying or ſuffering, tho daily perſecuted, impriſoned, ſtoned, beheaded, burnt, *&c.* even when more than Five thouſand were martyred in the *Roman* Empire for every Day in the Year, except the Firſt of *January* onely, (on which Day they accounted it a piece of Religion not to let any ſuffer): yet they patiently bore and ſuffered all, without making any Reſiſtance againſt their Rulers.

Nor can it be ſaid, they wanted Power to make reſiſtance, elſe they would have done it; for they were multiplied ſo greatly, that they filled their Cities, Caſtles, Camps, Palaces, and Towns; ſo as *Tertullian* writes, *If the Chriſtians ſhould depart out, and leave them, they ſhould remain deſolate.* Remarkable is the Story of the *Thebæan* Legion in the days of the Emperour *Maximinus*, conſiſting of Six thouſand ſix hundred and ſixty ſix armed Soldiers, all Chriſtians, under a Chriſtian Captain, who were in the *Savoy*, in a ſtrong Place, where they might have defended themſelves; yet being commanded by the Emperour to ſacrifice to his Gods, they refuſed to obey him therein, but made no reſiſtance: Whereupon

Whereupon he being angry, ſent forth his Meſſengers to put every tenth Man to death; which they willingly yielded to, without any reſiſtance, each ſtriving to have a ſhare in that glorious Death. Then he cauſed a ſecond Decimation or Tything of them, they remaining conſtant in their Faith, which they ſuffered patiently: And laſt he cauſed his Army to fall upon them, and deſtroy them all; which was done, they making not the leaſt reſiſtance, being willing to exchange this preſent Life for a more glorious.

If it ſhould be ſaid, They had no Laws then for their Religion, as we now have, and ſo may ſtand up for our Laws and Birth-rights, and may oppoſe all that invade them: I anſwer, As we have Laws for our Religion and Liberties, ſo we have Laws that forbid our oppoſing Authority, and riſing up againſt them, on any Pretence whatſoever; and making it Treaſon to take up Arms without the King's Commiſſion; and therefore muſt be content with the Defence of the Laws, and make no Reſiſtance or Rebellion.

Queſt. If it be asked, *What Help and Relief then*

then hath a People, if Rulers should violate the Laws, and invade Religion and Liberty, contrary to Law?

Answ. Our Help must then be in God, that made Heaven and Earth, and in his gracious Providence over his Church, who can, when he pleases, remove such Rulers, as he did *Julian*, *Antiochus*, *Diocleſian*, and our Queen *Mary*. And when a People be humbled for their Sins, repent, and seek him with all their Hearts, can restore Religion in greater lustre and glory, as in the Days of *Constantine* and Queen *Elizabeth*. Innumerable Examples are to be found in Histories ancient and modern, of God's Providence over his Church, in punishing Tyrants, and Persecutors of the Truth, and relieving his People when oppressed unjustly; which may encourage sincere Christians to commend their Case to God, without using unlawful Means to relieve themselves. Therefore, at such a time, a People ought onely to repent, and turn to God, and seek him with their whole Hearts, and use no other Means.

And in reference to our selves, let it be further considered, 1. That our Laws have long preserved our Religion, Rights, and Liberties amongst

amongſt us, and we may hope they may do ſo ſtill, unleſs we provoke God by our Sins to take away his Goſpel, and other Mercies, from us. 2. Other violent Ways and Means are likely to do more hurt than good, if it were lawful to take up Arms in vindication of them. It was a truly-Chriſtian Saying of the excellent *Fran. Junius*, in his *Animadverſions* on *Bellarmine*'s Books *de Tranſlatione Imperii, &c. l.* 1. *c.* 2. *That good Men ſhould rather bear any Injuries from their Magiſtrates, tho never ſo grievous, than inveigh againſt them in Word, Writing, or Action, to the diſturbance of Order and Publick Peace.* Let us conſider the manifold Evils likely to enſue on ſuch Reſiſtance. 1. Civil Wars will follow upon it, and the Conſequences of them will be ſad: What Rapins, Murders, Plunders, and other Miſchiefs, attend this! Our late ſad Experience will inform us ſufficiently herein. 2. Our Government is in danger to be altered, and we cannot expect to find a better Conſtitution: It muſt be the Reformation of Mens Hearts and Lives muſt put us into a better Condition, not the Change of Government. 3. Religion is like to ſuffer more hereby, than by Perſecution. In ſuch horrible

Confuſions

Confuſions of Nations, and treading down of Laws, what Sects, Hereſies, and Diviſions will ariſe, to the ruine of Religion! Whereas *the Blood of the Martyrs hath been the Seed of the Church*, and Sufferings have purified it, and made it more glorious. 4. If ſuch as do riſe up for defence of their Religion and Liberties, ſhall be conquered by their Oppreſſors, they are likely to come under far greater Slavery and Miſery, forfeiting their Eſtates, Lives, Rights, and Privileges, and perhaps come under Arbitrary Government, and abſolute Slavery; and what worſe Condition can be ſuppoſed? Now how uncertain are the Events of War! tho the Miſeries attending it are moſt certain. It's very ſeldom ſuch Attempts proſper, but moſt commonly they bring Ruine to thoſe who engage therein; as may be ſeen at large in the *Homily againſt Rebellion*, *Part* 4. Which *Homily* deſerves to be wholly read and conſidered by ſuch as are inclined to uſe ſuch unlawful Courſes for remedying Evils.

Obj. If it be objected, *That many Writers, Men of great Name, have pleaded for the Lawfulneſs of Reſiſtance in ſome Caſes.*

Anſw.

Anſw. They muſt be underſtood, if they write ſoundly, to ſpeak onely of ſuch Places where the Government allows it in caſe of Male-adminiſtration; as in *Germany*, where it was expreſly covenanted in the Conſtitution of that Government, *That the Princes of the Empire might, in caſe of his invading their Rights, defend them againſt the Emperour by War*, ſine nota Rebellionis, (as I remember, the Words are cited out of the *Golden Bull*) *without any Brand of Rebellion.* Which till *Luther* was ſatisfied in by the Lawyers, he would not conſent to the Confederation at *Smalcald.* The like is ſaid concerning the *Netherlands*, whoſe Laws acquitted them from the *Spaniſh* Yoke, upon the unjuſt and tyrannical Government of that King and his Miniſters. But this is nothing to our Caſe, whilſt our Laws prohibit ſuch taking up Arms, and make it Treaſon.

Laſtly, I add but one thing more; That there muſt be acknowledged at laſt a Supreme Power, ſubordinate to God alone, and not accountable to Men, nor to be reſiſted by them: or elſe all Confuſion and Diſorder would be in the World, and Subverſion of all Government,

which would make Mankind miserable. Now this had better be in the Hands of the King, or Chief Ruler, than in the Hands of any other, either the People in general, or of any Party of them. Rulers have usually more Understanding in Government than the People, and more Counsel and Helps; and their Power and Authority is from God, (who is the Original of all Power, *Rom.* 13. 1.) not from the People: As the Power of the Husband over the Wife is from God; tho her Consent be necessary to make him her Husband at first, yet she conveys not to him the Authority, but it is from the Ordinance of God. It is a dangerous Mistake to affirm, *That all Power is originally in the People, and they may intrust it to whom they please, and call their Rulers to account, and take the Forfeiture, and recall the Trust.* This hath been cleared by other Writers, who might have been cited here. Therefore it's the safest for Christians to sit still and be quiet, to mind their own Duties in their proper Sphere and Station, to study Peace and Holiness, and not to meddle with Publick Government, but to be subject to lawful Magistrates and Rulers in all lawful things; and if

any

any thing be amiſs, to commit their Caſe to God, and commend the Care of Religion and the Church to his Providence, who is *King of Kings, and Lord of Lords.*

Well then, Let me *put you in mind to be ſubject to Principalities and Powers, and to obey Magiſtrates.* This is the Word that God hath put into our Mouths; therefore we muſt warn you of this Duty from him. Thoſe whom God and the Laws have placed in Superiority over us, and he hath put his Power and Authority into their Hands, as his Deputies and Vicegerents, obey them, and be ſubject to them. Let there be a Subjection of the whole Man unto them; of the Heart, to reverence them, eſteem of them, love them, wiſh well to them, &c. if not for any Perſonal Excellency in them, yet for their Office ſake, which is of God, and for the Image of his Sovereignty ſtamped on them: Of the Tongue, not ſpeaking of them with reproachful Language, but honouring them as the Fathers of their Country: Of outward Geſtures, by bowing to them, uncovering the Head, and giving all outward Expreſſions of Honour befitting their Dignities: Of the whole Man, by

giving all due Obedience to their Laws, if not evidently contrary to the Laws of God: Of our Estates, by paying Tribute and other Dues to them.

Do this not onely to the Good, but also to the Bad, inasmuch as they are the Vicegerents of God; *There's no Power but of God*: The Apostle speaks it when such as *Nero* ruled. Do it for *Conscience sake* to God's Command, and not onely for fear of *Wrath*: *Heartily and willingly*, not in simulation and hypocrisie: yet *in the Lord*, so far as they cross not God's express Laws and Commandments, or the known Laws of the Land; and where they do so, yet make not any rebellious Resistance against them.

And for this end to make us willingly subject, consider, They are ordained of God, their Office is from him, and their Sovereignty part of his Image: And they are ordained for good unto us, Natural good, Civil Good, Moral good, Spiritual good, (as before was shewed:) Life, Peace, Liberty, Estate, Religion, are all fenced by Government. What a Condition would the World be in without it? It's better to have the worst Magistrates, than none at all.

Besides,

Beſides, the particular Intereſt of every Man ſhould move him to this Duty. Long Life and Proſperity is promiſed to the keeping this Commandment, to ſuch as honour Political Fathers and Mothers; but Death and Deſtruction will overtake ſuch as diſobey them: *A cruel Meſſenger ſhall be ſent to ſuch as ſeek Rebellion*, ſaith the Wiſe Man: beſides God's immediate Judgments that often befal ſuch, many Inſtances whereof are in our *Homily of Rebellion, Part* 4. and beſides all theſe, eternal Damnation, unleſs a ſpeedy and true Repentance prevent the ſame. Let all therefore learn this Duty of Obedience and Subjection to Princes, and to all that be in Authority.

Obj. But ſome will ſay, *We could in all Civil Matters be ſubject to them, and obey them as readily as any; but in Matters of Religion, how can we do ſo? Our Conſciences can admit of no Ruler or Lawmaker but Chriſt alone, who hath given perfect Direction for the Worſhip of God.*

Anſw. It is certain, Magiſtrates and Civil Rulers have ſome Power in Matters of Religion. 1. The very Light of Nature hath taught it. *Ariſtotle* and *Plato* ſhew, *That the chiefeſt Care*

of

of Magistrates ought to be about the Worship of God. *Darius* made a Decree, *That Men worship the God of* Daniel *onely.* *Cyrus* made a Decree for the Building of the Temple. The King of *Nineveh* ordained a Fast and solemn Prayers to God, and was accepted. 2. The good Kings of *Israel* are commended for their Zeal about the Worship and Service of God; not onely *David*, but *Jehosaphat*, *Hezekiah*, *Josiah*, and others: and they ordained several things about the Priests Ministration, and Prayers and Praises in the Temple. 3. Christian Kings and Emperours have been commended for their Care of Religion, as *Constantine*, *Theodosius*, *Justinian*, *&c.* And it's propheſied, *That in Gospel-times Kings should be Nursing-Fathers, and Queens Nursing-Mothers to the Church.* This is a Truth acknowledged by all Christians generally; and the contrary Opinion of the *Donatists*, and such like, condemned, who said, *Quid Imperatori cum Ecclesiis? What hath the Emperour to do with the Churches?*

We do not affirm, They can make a new Religion, coin new Articles of Faith, or set up a new Worship for Substance, or ordain any thing contrary to the Word of God; but they may order

order many External things about Religion, tending to the Solemnity, Order, and Decency of it, according to the general Rules laid down in the Scriptures; and all good Chriſtians ſhould obey them therein.

Obj. *But many ſinful things are now enjoyned, or at leaſt doubtful; and how can we obey them therein?*

Anſw. If it be certain that any thing enjoyned by them be ſinful, herein we are to follow the Apoſtle's Counſel, *Acts* 5. 29. *to obey God before Men.* We are not to obey any Idolatrous Edicts, nor embrace any falſe Doctrine or Worſhip. But here we muſt take heed, *we call not good evil, and evil good.* It is a raſh Charge to ſay, any ſuch thing is enjoyned us, that is certainly evil, when ſo many wiſe and pious Men, both in our own and other Nations, ſee no ſuch thing: And there is nothing amongſt us, but hath been found in the beſt and pureſt Churches ever ſince the Apoſtles days. Little do ſuch, who ſpeak ſo, underſtand or conſider the State of the Chriſtian Church throughout the World. A good Chriſtian will be tender to brand Magiſtrates with ſuch an Accuſation, yea the whole Catholick Church, but rather ſuſpect his own Judgment.

Obj.

Obj. *But at least many things now commanded are doubtful to us, and how can we then obey them?* Whatever is not of Faith, is Sin; *if we do any thing doubtingly, we are condemned, God will not approve of us. This makes some good Men afraid.*

Answ. But here the sincere Christian must needs have Doubts on both sides; for he must scruple the not obeying Magistrates, (because it is a Duty expresly commanded by God in things not sinful) as well as scruple to obey them in such things wherein he hath some little Doubts about the Lawfulness of them: Therefore he must not rest in this condition, but,

1. He must seek out for Satisfaction about his Doubts; he must indifferently hear, and read, and consider what is said on both sides; lay by all Prejudice and Partiality, which blind the Mind; mistrust his own Judgment, and take Advice of such as are more able to judge of such Matters than himself. He ought to think, that Magistrates have more Counsel and Helps to see what is most fitting for the general Welfare of the Church, than Private Persons, who may be led by their particular Interests. And let him remember, that nothing is now enjoyned,

joyned, that is judged ſinful by the greateſt part of the Chriſtian Churches, either in this or former Ages, when Religion flouriſhed far more than it doth in theſe Times, ſince theſe Controverſies have been ſtarted; therefore great reaſon to ſuſpect and try here.

2. Such as upon theſe Scruples ſuſpend Obedience in ſome things, which they ſuſpect to be ſinful, ſhould (and will, if they deal uprightly in this Point) be more forward to obey in all other things that they cannot but ſee to be lawful; herein let them ſhew their readineſs to obey. Certainly the Practice of ſuch as make a total Separation from us, is Unchriſtian, and ſo has been judged by all *Nonconformiſts*, *Independents* as well as *Presbyterians*, and the *Browniſts* deeply cenſured by both of them for it. Read the Books of *Bradſhaw*, *Ball*, and other *Presbyterian* Miniſters, and the *Apologetical Narration* of the Five *Independent* Miniſters, *&c.*

3. Becauſe there are ſome things that are ſo dark and doubtful to the common ſort of Chriſtians, that they can never fully underſtand them, and ſo ſome Scruples may remain in truly tender and pious Spirits. They are to know,

it is their Duty in such Cases to give up themselves to the Conduct of their Rulers and Guides, and to follow their Directions, till God give them more Light in those things; for they are appointed of God to be Guides and Leaders of the Ignorant and Weak; and tho they are not to follow them blindfold in all things (where they may be certain they mislead them) yet, in disputable Points, there is more safety in following them than others, tho possibly in some smaller Matters they may err with them. In Civil Matters Casuists agree, That Private Persons ought to obey their Rulers in some things, the Lawfulness whereof they may scruple: As in Matters of Warfare, they may pay Taxes, or go in Person to War, tho not fully satisfied of the Lawfulness of such War: *Ames. Cas. Consc. l.* 5. *c.* 33. And in Church matters this is practised by those that are Dissenters from us; the sobereſt of whom, when they have some Scruples about an Opinion or Practice, yet give themselves up to be guided by, and walk peaceably with those to whom they associate themselves, alledging for so doing that in *Cant.* 1. 8. *to go by the footsteps of the Flock, and by the Shepherds*

herds Tents. Certainly the ſincere Chriſtian may here give in his Plea to God, ſo as to be accepted, if he can ſay, *Lord, thou knoweſt the ſincerity of my Heart; I would not do any thing I know ſinful, upon the greateſt temptation in the World: I am one under Authority, and ſo obliged to obey it in the Lord. That requires ſome things now of me, I have Scruples about, whether they be lawful or not. Did I know them certainly to be evil, I would not do them, whatever I ſuffered: But I cannot conclude that certainly they are ſinful. Thou haſt ſet them to rule and guide me; I ſhall follow their Conduct, till I be ſure they miſlead me; and when I perceive they do ſo, I am reſolved to deſert them, and to do whatever thou commandeſt me: And in thus doing, Shew Mercy to me according to the Integrity of my Heart.* Certainly ſuch an one ſhall not be condemned of the good and gracious God. This I have ſpoken, and now written, to promote Subjection and Obedience to Magiſtrates, as my Text commands me: *Put them in mind to be ſubject to Principalities and Powers, and to obey Magiſtrates.*

THE END.